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The Compound Constitutional Republic and Richard Stands

A colleague told me the story of how she thought, when saying the Pledge of Allegiance as a child, that the words were "...and to the republic for Richard Stands." She wondered who Richard Stands was and why he was so important, and that misconception stayed with her for years.

I was thinking of this story in reference to the recent Utah legislation enacted that requires the study of forms of government including a republic, a pure democracy, a monarchy and an oligarchy, political philosophies and economic systems including socialism, individualism, and free market capitalism, and the United States' form of government, a compound constitutional republic. In the case of my colleague, even though she recited the Pledge as a child, she did not understand it fully. What we all want for our Utah students is a firm grasp not only of the words, but of their meaning. Social studies concepts are often complex and at times abstract. Our responsibility is to make them as comprehensible for our students as possible.

In terms of compound constitutional republic, it should not be that difficult to explain the ideas to students, and many teachers already do a great job of it. Republic is a word and concept students have been using since they began hearing the Pledge. They should understand that in a republic the people -- or *public* -- retain power over government, and elect representatives to serve in government. Likewise, "constitution" will not

be new to our students, and understanding the central role of the rule of law is essential for Utah students. Compound essentially means that while the United States is one republic, this republic is comprised of states and territories and tribal lands, with their own laws and claims of sovereignty, and with systems of checks and balances. This concept is reflected even in the name of our nation, united, yet individual, states. Teaching about the compound nature of our constitutional republic will help students explore ideas like federalism and the tensions regarding states' rights, ideas that were at the center of political debate even as the Founders were writing the Constitution, and which remain in the public marketplace of ideas even today. Depending on the grade level, Utah students can explore these ideas with powerful lessons ranging from holding student government elections to conducting close readings of The Federalist Papers, relevant Supreme Court decisions, or any number of other key documents from our nation's history.

I look forward to sharing some excellent strategies teachers are using to help students understand these and other key social studies concepts in the months to come on the social studies web site. This fall within the same week we commemorate the tenth anniversary of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 we will celebrate Constitution Day, and I cannot think of a more fitting way to end that week than with excellent lessons about our Constitution.

Our goal in all of this to help move students from misconceptions to clear concepts, from "for Richard Stands" to "for which it stands."

Robert Austin, USOE

Summer Professional Development Courses

We have set up four USOE endorsement courses this summer, and they are all FREE. They are now on the OnTrack system and registrations are filling up. Ancient World History, Utah Geography, Physical Geography, Utah Specialized History (Topaz) are USOE offerings. To register, go to the [OnTrack link: http://usoe.truenorthlogic.com/](http://usoe.truenorthlogic.com/)

UCSS is offering a **Social Studies Methods** course, and you can find it and links to other courses by logging onto OnTrack and searching for courses using a keyword like "social." Tuition varies, but most of them are bargains.

Common Core Academy sessions for the English Language Arts Common Core are also now open for general registration. Check OnTrack –search using "common" for sessions near you, and if there are openings, you may want to talk with your district representatives about attending. There are strong connections between the ELA Common Core and Social Studies pedagogy.

Other resources:

University of Utah Tanner Humanities Center Gateway to Learning Educator Workshops
<http://www.thc.utah.edu/>

University of Utah will hold a social studies methods class June 20 – 24
<http://www.ed.utah.edu/UITE/Summer2011brochure.pdf>

Community Mapping Workshops

These can be used for Utah studies and geography electives as long as they tie to the core:

<http://www.uen.org/cmap/index.html>

General Financial Literacy Course:

The 2-day training is designed for teachers newly assigned to teach the GFL HS required course. There are two options for the 2-day training.

July 11-12, 2011 in **Cedar City** or

July 20-21, 2011 in West Jordan

The one-day training on July 19, 2011, provides additional information and resources for those who have already attended the 2-day training and for newly assigned teachers. Registrations for these workshops are online through the On-Track registration system: <http://usoe.truenorthlogic.com/>

Help UGA!

Norma Jean Remington writes:

National Geographic and Utah Geographic Alliance (UGA) are collaborating to evaluate current geographic literacy needs and to strategically plan to improve geographic literacy over the next several years. I thank you in advance for your support toward these ends. As Coordinator of the Utah Geographic Alliance, I am excited about the improvements in geographic literacy that will come from our ongoing strategic planning efforts.

To help us set strategic planning priorities, will you please complete a short survey? The survey will take you approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Please provide us your honest feedback and best ideas. The results of your feedback will be shared with all UGA members and the subsequent planning priorities will be communicated. I strongly encourage your participation in this effort and express my gratitude for your cooperation.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NJY989H>

If you have any questions, feel free to email me (nremington@dsdmail.net).

Sincerely,

Norma Jean Remington
UGA Coordinator

Help Utah State History!

Utah State History has created a new I Love History website <http://ilovehistory.utah.gov/> to provide learning resources for young people, teachers and anyone interested in Utah's past. State History would greatly appreciate you reviewing their new website and completing a short survey to help them assess and improve the site. <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/6HCYZ55> This survey will be active until May 30, 2011 so take a minute right now!

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your feedback is very important to State History. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Alycia Aldrich at (801) 533-3556 or by email at aaldrich@utah.gov.

Milestones of Freedom at the Sandy Healing Field

Scott Swain of Roots of Freedom writes:

This year is the 10 year anniversary for 9/11 and America's first Healing Field is going to have a massive event! September 9-12 at the Sandy City grounds will be the site of thousands of flags and continuous BIG events. One of these BIG events is our full Milestones of Freedom simulation at the north end by the City Center building! Bring your students, your family, your co-workers and most importantly, YOU to this VERY SPECIAL event. You need to pre-register for this event at www.milestonesatsandyhf.org. This site will also provide all the information you need for this event. See you there!

International Research and Exchange Opportunity

The International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) is excited to announce a new professional development opportunity for middle and high school teachers from the United States, Teachers for Global Classrooms (TGC)! The goal of TGC is to provide teachers with the skills and experience to promote global education in their classrooms and schools. The Teachers for Global Classrooms Program (TGC) features an online course aimed at globalizing U.S. classrooms, two Global Education Symposiums, and international travel. Participants are selected through a national, open competition. TGC is a program of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) administered by IREX (the International Research & Exchanges Board). Please see the program page on the IREX website for further information: <http://www.irex.org/project/teachers-global-classrooms-program-tgc> The deadline for applications is June 15!

If you have ideas or comments on the newsletter, or resources you wish to share with your fellow educators, please drop me a line at robert.austin@schools.utah.gov

To subscribe to the Social Studies mailing list visit:

<https://lists.uen.org/mailman/listinfo/socstudies>

